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Minutes, Arts & Sciences Academic Affairs Committee Meeting, Tuesday, April 21, 2009

Arts & Sciences Academic Affairs Committee

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AAC Minutes (April 21, 2009)

In attendance: Wendy Brandon, Laurie Joyner, Jim Small, Steve St. John, Susan Lackman, Scott Rubarth, Jennifer Cavanaugh, Eric Zivot, Yusheng Yao, Barry Levis, Christopher Fuse, Tocarra Mallard

Announcements: Wendy: Members should read both versions of April 2nd minutes—the original one by Yusheng and the one with my revisions. Please weigh in on those issues and vote on the one you'd like to put on AAC website.

Laurie: preregistration for Maymester was a success with 72 registered. Wendy: two new members of AAC are present—Berry Levis and Christopher Fuse. The other two members are Alex Boguslawski and Dawn Roe and I will send them invitations to come for our next meeting. Laurie: we hope more to come to the reception to celebrate faculty publications (5 published books and 26 refereed journal articles).

Old Business: Susan explained the changes she had made in the final draft of “Incomplete” policy. In the first paragraph, the emphasis was on “when serious and compelling circumstances beyond the control of the student....” In the second paragraph, the sentence was added about the responsibility of the faculty members: “Faculty who fail to submit a grade for a student by the deadline set by the College will be penalized at the discretion of the Dean.” Jim: What will happen to the faculty [who didn't follow the rule]? Eric: I would request the faculty to give explanations for a habit of doing this. Levis: [there are] students who are unable to get their work in on time such as those in Honors 402 in the Shanghai Program. Jennifer: there should be a policy [about it] for overseas study. Like having paper work done before they go. Jim: if the grade is not turned in [by the deadline], the Dean's, the registrar's and the faculty's assumptions are an “F.” Laurie: Students should not be responsible for the faculty's problem. The Dean's office should deal with this problem. Under lots of circumstances, the problem was with the faculty. Jim: Toni has names [of those who routinely disregard the rule about giving “Incomplete”]. If students don't turn in their work, these faculties are lenient and the problem persists. Laurie: we should not penalize the students [if it is not their problem]. Faculty are responsible for giving out a “F.” Susan: the students have to submit the form. If they don't, Faculty assign them a “F.” There are just a few faculty members doing this. Toni has names. I suggest to have a conversation with them [about the rule]. Eric: I'm still inclined to vote on this, mindful of the Dean's discomfort about it. Wendy: the new information can be a community teaching tool if we make it clear to students as well—put the policy in the Student Handbook, for example. Rollins is undergoing a change in culture. We will see what will happen next semester [with this modification of rules about “Incomplete”]. Laurie: there will be a lot of requests for grade changes and appeals. Scott: we have two options: “Incomplete or F.” Students should take more responsibility. Laurie: I see it as a faculty responsibility. We should make suggestions to the faculty rather than to students. Scott: send them a formal letter; followed by another letter and withholding of their paycheck—intimidating letters to show we are serious. Wendy: Students should have a place to see clear rules about this. Steve: we should have a control on Fox Link. A page [about the rules of Incomplete] to pop up? Wendy: some kind of flag to warn the faculty. The revised version about the “Incomplete” was passed with

amendments. Jennifer: to inform the faculty that de facto grade is "F." Steve: to incorporate Laurie's point: if by the end of the semester the grade is not turned in, it is a "F." Eric: As AAC's Appeal Committee, to articulate: the committee has the authority to call in the faculty with a pattern of giving out "Incompletes." [Not clear to me] Jim: we will see how it will shake out next semester. Steve: there should be a paragraph, notifying the faculty before they turn in the blank for a grade in the Fox Link. Laurie: I will work with Toni with the AAC's recommendations. [to answer the question for an extension of the deadline of turning in the grade] Laurie: we need a balance. We can extend for 24 hours. It is very inconvenient for the staff. They have to do hand calculations on GPA [after the system is shut down.] Wendy: during the faculty retreat, to announce it, a change of policy. Why don't we have enough time for faculty to see others' views.

Creston Davis came to discuss changes to the Religious Studies major and minor. Creston: The basic change is to shift focus from the Western to more open, non-Western orientation. The old core course "Religions in America" is deemphasized in changing into an elective. Asian religions are emphasized for students to acquire a global perspective. Eric: What are the perceived benefits of the change? "Religion in America" emphasized Christianity. We have another course on Christianity. Eric: What stops the department from reimagining "Religion in America" as a more diverse course? Creston: Historically, the religion in America includes Roman Catholicism, Protestantism. Only in recent of 40 years, American religion became more pluralistic. That makes the last two to three weeks of the semester. I am trained in the Western religion and Mario in the Eastern religion. We want to spotlight the East. Scott: students could, if they choose, not take single course on Christianity. Steve: do you have more specific topic course on psychology (Psy 315)? Scott: You need a catalogue copy for the regularly recurring courses. Wendy: credits for overseas study like the African-American Studies. More developmental outcomes. Scott: a capstone course. Wendy: send us a catalogue copy and we'll look at the final version. Jim; the changed curriculum is more balanced. Eric: It reflects more actual representation of the faculty expertise. Jim: I propose to accept it pending the catalogue copy. The change in the curriculum of Religious Studies was passed.

Discussion on the Draft of Academic Appeal revision. Eric: the only change I made was based on our discussion on social suspension, which will be a interruption in academic experience. Laurie: Students need to reflect on why she/he has been suspended. Most quality institutions do not accept credits from community college. For readmission, students should sit with someone representing the Dean's office. Not just a letter from student to explain their problems and what they did to address them in the intervening year. Scott: a change for the last sentence: "s/he must make a case to demonstrate that they are prepared to resume academic study. This will typically involve a letter from the student, and a meeting with a representative of the Dean's office, usually the chair of the department."

The meeting was adjourned